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ABSTRACT

Instructional objectives for a junior college course in technical report writing for police science students are presented. The objectives are offered as samples that may be used where they correspond to the skills, abilities, and attitudes instructors want their students to acquire. They may also serve as models for assisting instructors to translate their own courses into specific measurable terms. (MB)

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Objectives and Organization of Technical Report Writing for Police

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

ENGLISH 43-1

TECHNICAL REPORT WRITING FOR POLICE

Instructor: Clarice R. Cox

Class: Thursday 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Honolulu Police Station
1455 South Beretania Street
Room 203

Office: Daily 8:00-8:50 a.m.
Honolulu Community College
Bldg. 5, Room 101

COURSE TITLE: English 43-1 (Technical Report Writing for Police)

Principles and practice in organizing and presenting the information required in law enforcement. Review of English grammar will be used to supplement standard methods of referring to and describing people, places and property involved in police action so the student will be able to turn in correct, concise, complete reports.

SEMESTER UNITS: 3

HOURS PER WEEK: 3

Since the course is basically a skills course regular attendance -- or at the minimum, media pack make up -- is required of all class members.

PREREQUISITES:

Membership in the Honolulu Police Department and registration with Honolulu Community College or joint permission of the instructor and the Police Science Coordinator.

CLASSWORK AND HOMEWORK:

A student is expected to spend two hours preparing for each class hour, making a total of 9 clock hours a week; part of this preparation should be the use of the Tutor Tape and other media developed by the instructor and located in the library adjacent to the Training Division at the police station.

TEXTS:

Since no text exactly fits the class needs, writing a text has been an ongoing class project. Textbook from 1970-1971 is available in the Training Division Library. The following inexpensive paperbacks are recommended; the first should be purchased, the second is optional:

Police Report Writing, Bureau of Industrial Education, California Peace Officers' Training Series 74, California Department of Education, Sacrament, 1962.

Office Encyclopedia compiled and edited by N.H. and S.K. Mager, Pocket Books, Simon and Schuster, Inc. 630 Fift Avenue, 1966, 498 pp.

Other reference material, including books, programmed study with texts or media are available either at the police library or the one at Honolulu Community College. Please request help, if needed, from the instructor.

MATERIALS:

The student is requested to work as much as possible with actual reports prepared on an ongoing basis in the division in which he works or to which he may expect transfer. He should have access to the following:

1 Honolulu Police Department Recruit Training Packet.
2 Standard dictionary.
3 Extra forms needed in his own work area.

GOALS:

1 To organize and present efficiently the information needed in law enforcement so that only the precise and intended meaning is conveyed, both accurately and objectively.

2 To write clearly the following styles of presentation: form, narrative, chronological, specialized and combination.

3 To write the following reports determined by the stage of the investigation: initial, supplemental and attachments.

4 To use effectively other modes of communication: tape recorder, overhead projector, slide projector and movie when required for presentation of information or instruction.

5 To use both standard and locally accepted format and nomenclature in writing reports concerning these basic police functions: prevention of crime, protection of life, and property, preservation of peace, apprehension of criminals and recovery of property and prosecution of criminals.

6 To be an effective member of a committee in all of the following roles: chairman, member and recorder.

7 To take personal responsibility to help achieve the goals of the Honolulu Police Department through improving their own reports.

8 To be able to point out errors in report writing to those under the direction or supervision of the class member.

OBJECTIVES:

1 Visually clear organization of face page

Task: To organize the face page, using correct allignment, clear lettering or typing, capitalization, abbreviation and indentation so that report can be quickly and accurately read.

Objectives continued:

Conditions: On Vehicle Report form HPD-197R, using material recorded on a cassette tape, the student will correctly fill all blanks within 30 minutes, either using a typewriter or lettering with a black ball point pen.

Criteria: Within the allotted time, the student will produce a face page with no numbers blank, with no gross errors and a maximum of two minor errors. The report will be judged by the instructor for grammar and presentation and by two fellow officers for information.

2 Visually clear organization of narrative attachment

Task: To organize and present material on narrative page, using topics, subtopics, indentation, capitalization and arrangement so that material is quickly and accurately conveyed.

Conditions: On narrative attachment to Vehicle Report form HPD-197R, the student will organize material presented to him on a cassette tape as given by two witnesses to an accident. Within 45 minutes, using either a typewriter or a black ball point pen the student will arrange important information in a continuation of the form report.

Criteria: Within the alloted time, the student will arrange information under topics and subtopics, using proper capitalization, i.e. surname completely in capital letters, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure, with no gross errors and only three minor errors. The report will be judged by the instructor for grammar and presentation and by two fellow officers for information.

3 Quick and efficient reporting of observed incident

Task: To observe, organize and record information with student as witness to the action.

Objectives continued: Quick and efficient reporting of observed incident

Conditions: On Robbery Report form HPD 196, after viewing on film a robbery involving one victim and two suspects, the student will write a witness report within 45 minutes with additional narrative using either a typewriter or a black ball point pen.

Criteria: Within the allotted time, the student will arrange information on face page with all initial information and each blank accounted for (where information is not given it should be marked NONE, REFUSED or UNKNOWN) and accurate synopsis given. Supplemental pages or attachments may be added as required. Information will be judged for facts not assumptions, ease of reading and correct form. Instructor will judge for grammar and two fellow officers for information. Only three minor errors will be allowed.

4 Accuracy in spelling words used in law enforcement

Task: To master a list of 750 words most commonly misspelled in police report writing and use words accurately in sentences.

Conditions: In a series of tests given after study of word lists, twenty of the fifty words studied are dictated in a sentence context. Words may be dictated by the instructor live or on cassette. Students correct lists by referring to printout of words, marking each error in red and keeping list of errors. After series has been given, words most commonly misspelled by entire group will be dictated in group of twenty.

Criteria: Student will receive A for 1 or 0 error
B for 2 to 3 errors
C for 4 to 5 errors
D for 6 to 7 errors
F for 7 or more errors

5 Ability to recognize deadwood in reports

Task: To eliminate unnecessary words in reports of others and in their own reports.

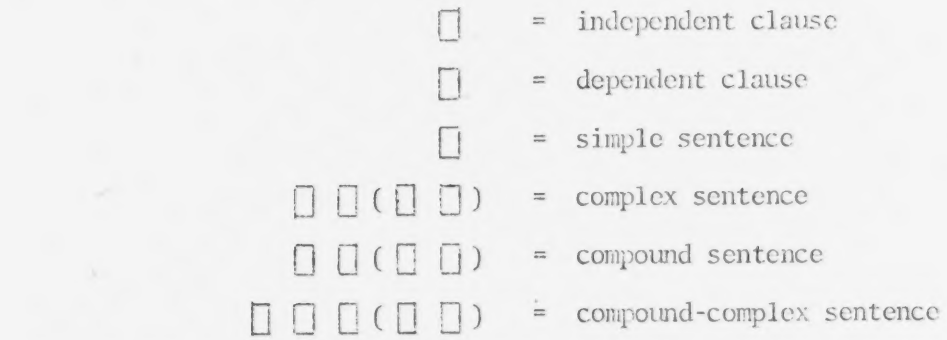
Conditions: Sentences containing unnecessary words are taken from reports turned in by officers and used for this test. Given 5 such sentences the student will eliminate words, rewriting, if necessary, to produce 5 clear and exact sentences within 25 minutes time. Work will be done in class using black ball point pen.

Criteria: All five sentences must - in the judgement of the instructor and fellow officers - be clear and uncluttered Only three minor errors may be allowed in revision. Exercises judged best by class will receive A. Others will be assigned relative grades by instructor, opinion being that of the time read. Reaction of fellow police officers will be criterion for meaning.

6 Ability to recognize sentence structure

Task: To differentiate simple, complex, compound and compound-complex sentences.

Conditions: The student will use the following symbols to analyze sentences in class:



(Parentheses indicate optional additional clauses)

Objectives continued: Ability to recognize sentence structure

Using a group of ten sentences provided by the instructor, the student will indicate with above symbols the kind and number of clauses in the margin. From this he will then identify the type of sentence. Time allowed, 30 minutes.

Criteria: Each sentence must be identified correctly as to structure, number and kind of clauses. The number of correct sentences and the corresponding grades follow:
A for 9 or 10
B for 8
C for 7
D for 6
F for below 6

7 Ability to correct punctuation on reports

Task: To recognize incorrect punctuation and correct it.

Conditions: Using a group of twenty sentences gathered by the instructor from reports handed in by the class, student will make corrections on mimeographed pages. No references are allowed and task must be completed in 45 minutes. Student should circle excess punctuation and add needed punctuation as well as change position of punctuation if required. There may be two or more errors in a sentence but each sentence will count five.

Criteria: Instructor will decide correct form with reference to handouts supplied earlier for the purpose of studying proofreading. Student will receive the following grades:
A for 0 to 2 errors
B for 3 to 4 errors
C for 5 to 6 errors
D for 7 to 8 errors
F for 9 or more errors

8 Ability to use other modes of communication

Task: To use tape recorder, overhead projector, slide projector and movie projector when required for presentation of information or instruction.

Conditions: Divided into five groups, each student of each group will take turns in class demonstrating facility with each of the above modes of communication. Chairman in each group will sign that student is able to set up equipment in five minutes and operate for three minutes along with commentary deemed valuable at the time by the chairman. The chairman may solicit opinion from other members of the group to arrive at decisions.

Criteria: Random checks will be made by instructor, requesting that various class members demonstrate facility to class, following a discussion of uses of communication in police work.

COURSE ORGANIZATION:

Listing below is by weeks. Changes may be made to take advantage of special speakers or activities. Preparation of a student written text or brochure on police report writing includes practice on all the above objectives. Minimum of five reports is required, also one log on day assigned and ongoing listing of errors. Class lectures, quiz corrections and other materials will be recorded for use in the carrel of HPD library.

1 Organizational meeting. Explanation of media pack located in Honolulu Police Department library. Handouts: Spelling booklet, check list, course description, last term's brochure. Discussion of Chapter 1, Police Report Writing. Pictures taken for ID cards. Opening speaker from Homicide, stressing need for accurate reports by beatmen, detectives and others involved.

2 Chapter 2, Requisites of a Good Report. Grammar pretest. Review of grammar, analysis of needs. Transparencies on requirements of group member, recorder and chairman. Formation of five (5) groups.

Course Organization continued:

3 Handouts on grammar. Second quiz on grammar. Analysis of parts of speech and types of sentences. Spelling quiz.

4 Chapter 3, Kinds of Police Reports. Division of class groups according to work area: patrolmen, vice, Malcon, etc. Discussion of forms used. Writing of report in work area.

5 Chapter 4, The Writing Process: physical arrangement of information, sequence, grammar and word use. Analysis of reports handed in. Spelling quiz.

6 Chapter 5, Elements of a Report. Quiz on errors taken from reports handed in previous week. Spelling quiz.

7 Chapter 6, Preparation of Narrative Reports. Guest speaker to emphasize content and format. Spelling quiz. Group discussion.

8 Report writing for mid term grade. Robbery picture filmed last term on Super 8 camera with Tri X film will be presented. Class will have robbery form and extra paper for narrative and will write report from standpoint of witness. Film is 3 minutes with only 1 minute of actual action accompanied by sound tape also prerecorded. Class time allowed to write report is 45 minutes. Topics and subtopics must be used in narrative. All boxes must be filled on form report. Instructor will judge grammar. Only 3 minor errors and no gross errors allowed in narrative form. Class will divide in groups to discuss and select best examples from standpoint of information.

9 Chapter 7, Description of Persons. Transparencies made from feature analysis shown. Discussion of adjectives to explain facial and other characteristics. Quiz from transparencies. Guest lecture stressing accuracy in descriptions and avoidance of such terms as the often recurring "Unknown Local Male." Group discussion using members to analyze and describe

10 Grammar review and new handouts as required. Committees formed to revise brochure written by previous class. Spelling quiz.

Course Organization continued:

11 Chapter 8, Description of Vehicles. Speaker from Malcon.

12 Chapter 9, Description of Property other than Vehicles. Group study with catalogs. Demonstrations prepared in one grop to give to another group. Spelling Quiz.

13 Chapter 10, first part of Crime Reports as Required by Statute, p. 69-83. Vocabulary study and group discussions. Quiz on errors culled from reports handed in. Spelling quiz.

14 Chapter 10, p. 84-94. Committee meetings on text. Speaker on crime reports. Spelling quiz. Editors chosen for text.

15 Chapter 10, p. 95-104. Committee reports for text. Revisions due. Committees go over revisions and hand to editors. Demonstrations of audio visual aids by all groups.

16 Review. Clarification of final needs for text before handing to typist. Further discussion of problem and solution format for all sections of text.

17 No final. Evaluation of course and instructor using forms from Evaluation Officer, University of Hawaii. Suggestions for improving the course. Students will pick up their copies of text upon completion of typing and xeroxing. Students who have missed any classes will turn in makeup work on an on going basis and this will be considered also for final grade. Main basis for grades will be improvement in report writing.